



WORLD GOSPEL
OUTREACH

THINGS NEW MISSIONARIES NEED TO KNOW

WELCOME TO HONDURAS

WGO HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION



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DIFFERENT

“We’re not in Kansas anymore Toto!”

Dorothy experienced culture shock in the movie “The Wizard of Oz”. You will too, and you will probably utter words similar to those. It is very different here in Honduras. You are going to have to adjust to a new language. Living life is not as convenient. Security issues are different. You cannot drink tap water. Houses are set up different. The pace of life is different. And just what is in that waste basket next to the toilet?

This document will help you to adjust to the differences. You will also have someone assigned to help you through the process of adjusting here and getting set up.

CHANGE

The number one rule is that practically the only thing constant is **change**. That last statement can not be fully understood until you experience it. Beginning with the processing of your papers the “change rule” will be always be in play here in Honduras. Today you will need this or that paper but tomorrow the same paper isn’t applicable – you will need some other paper. The way things are done can and will change. We will try very hard to let you know how things are done, but invariably you will arrive to do business and the authorities will require something else and won’t get your issues dealt with as quickly as you would like. It is OK; we will get it done sooner or later. Waiting until the last minute is not the way to go if you can avoid it. It is important if you are a highly organized “got to get it done person,” to realize that you may not get it done today, and maybe have a backup goal, or several backup goals, and understand you may not get any of those things done as or when you would like.

It is important to remember that you are coming to a frontier, both in the spiritual and cultural sense. In the spiritual sense, you are on a frontier because you will be on the front lines in terms of spiritual battle. In the cultural and ministry sense, things just will not always happen in a logical, sensible way, nor is everything all structured and predictable. Think of yourself as taking the equivalent journey as the wagon train pioneers did in the 1700’s, i.e., every day is an adventure and brings surprises and expected turn of events and, to survive you will have to learn to be interdependent with the other missionaries.

HERE TO HELP

When you first arrive in Honduras you may feel like you have regressed to status of a 5 year old child in that you need someone to take you everywhere and show you everything. Kind of like you can’t cross the street without someone holding your hand. That’s normal and we really want to be cautious for your sake. The city is big, very confusing to drive in at first and there are no street signs There very few pay phones so your potential for a dangerous situation without language or communication tools is very possible. Let us show you the ropes, the basic routes we take, the stores we shop, and how to maneuver, we are happy to do it. You’ll feel like you’re imposing after the millionth question but remember we all went through it and the ones here the longest will have interesting stories to tell you about. We hope you to help you avoid most of those adventures.

Also, each of us considers it our personal ministry to you to help you, just as others helped us when we arrived.

INTO THE BATTLE

If you are like the rest of us you feel a little worn from disposing of excess things, selling or renting your house, raising support, saying goodbye to friends, family, and your church, packing the things you are taking, arriving in country feeling like you have accomplished a lot. For sure, you have completed a huge undertaking. Congratulations, and welcome to the war!!! I know the term “war” is a little abrupt but we need you to know you have in fact arrived on a spiritual battlefield. You are in a vulnerable state and Satan is not happy you’re here.

REFRESHED AND FIT

So first of all make sure your spiritual life and walk stay current and that you get refreshed spiritually. You’ll need to make that a priority to make it here. Things like taking part in a weekly bible study, meeting with accountability partner, private prayer time, praying with others, and so on, really help to keep you spiritually fit and are essential components to your sustained preparedness on the mission field. You can get caught up in the thousand things you “need” to do but remind yourself Jesus Himself many times left a “need,” got away and refreshed himself spiritually, physically, and mentally. In *Matthew 8*, Jesus had just preached the Sermon on the Mount, and healed many people. Seeing a crowd around Him He gave orders to depart to the other side of the sea. There was a still lot to do but He left. Many times Jesus left and got away and refreshed Himself. You must have a plan to refresh yourself. You must keep current in your relationship with the LORD.

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

Attacks can manifest themselves in a variety of forms: frustration from the pace of life here, frustration from lack of ability to communicate with this culture, the very different way people drive here, your things being somewhere where you aren’t and a customs official deciding that your container is not going to be released for a unspecified reason, you are freaking out, and when you are under control someone else in your family is freaking out, your vision of what you had in mind to accomplish got sidetracked, someone really is starting to irritate you, you or your wife or member of your family has blurted out *“What are we doing here!! I want to go home!”* ***The good news is that you eventually adjust to things with God’s grace and help from others here.*** All or most of what you are experiencing someone has already been through and is available for help. We are a family here so let a big sister or brother help you.

This brochure is designed to lessen the blow of the “culture shock.” *It would be impractical to say this information is the complete guide to all the possible situations you may encounter, but this is a start and a guide for living here.* Your job description and responsibilities may vary and the specific nuances surrounding that will be handled by your supervisor. We have tried to list some of the basics; and the process of adjusting will differ depending on the frame of reference you came here with, how adaptable you are, how well the rest of your family here and at home are adjusting to and influencing your changes, and most of all how mature you are in your walk with God. A good example of this is the story of how a fairly new missionary realized, after a short period of time, that their attitude was less than gracious to all in contact with them and they confessed in a bible study with others their plight and disappointment in their lack of Christian maturity with the remark “I am displeased with how I am responding in many and most situations.” A “veteran” who had lived here much longer responded “Living here has a way of sanctifying you.”

PASSPORT, VISA AND RESIDENCY “OH MY”

PASSPORT: you will need to complete the following as soon as possible:

- 1) Current Passport: if you already have a passport, it cannot expire within six (6) months of your end time in Honduras make sure it is up-to-date. or
- 2) New Passport: get a passport as soon as possible. This typically takes 6-12 weeks unless you expedite the request. Go to your local Post Office today if you need to update or request a new passport. You will need do the following:
 - Apply in person
 - Proof of Citizenship: is required which will be your original (seal) Birth Certificate & a picture ID.
 - Down load an Application Form: go to: www.travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html and complete it on line. Then print your application. This web site will also provide you all of the details plus inform you that that the “Passport Processing Times Have Increased Due to High Volume.” By doing this on the web site, it will help expedite your process and time at the Post Office. The Post Office can assist you plus take your picture and send by overnight mail if needed.

Bring five color copies of your passport with you, a copy in each of your luggage and carry the original passport with you on the plane. Do not keep the copies with your passport. Note: A passport is an internationally recognized travel document that verifies the identity and nationality of the bearer. A valid U.S. passport is required to enter and leave Honduras. Only the U.S. Department of State has the authority to grant issue and verify United States passports.

VISA you will be given two documents on the airplane to fill out prior to landing in Tegucigalpa. One is a customs form and the other is your visa which is in effect for 30 days.

If You Are Here For - LESS than 30 DAYS: one document that you receive on the plane is the visa paperwork. When you arrive at the airport you will first go to the immigration counter. At that time, you will be issued the actual visa. By default the immigration official will give you only 30 days. No further action is needed. This will suffice for your length of stay.

NOTE: on the form enter the WGO address:

Alcance Mundial del Evangelio,
Casa de Sembrador,
Colonia El Hatillo, KM 7,
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Telefono: 211-8959.

If you are here For - MORE than 30 DAYS (all Interns and Missionaries): One document that you receive on the plane is the visa paperwork. When you arrive at the airport you will first go to the immigration counter. At that time, you will be issued the actual visa. By default the immigration official will give you only 30 days. **Therefore, Request a 90 DAY VISA:** at the counter the intern or missionary will have to ask for a 90 day visa. In Spanish, you would say, “*Noventa dias, por favor*”. It should be no problem, but sometimes you have to ask twice. If for some reason the immigration insists on only a 30 day visa, please let us know so that we can plan for renewals. We must renew your visa before 30 days is up. We will find out the exact cost for you for renewal depending on how long you extend your visa.

RESIDENCY: you can not stay in country for more than 6 months without a residency being in process. With this in mind we require that all full time missionaries here for longer than six months apply for residency. Otherwise, as mentioned above, you must leave the country every 6 months for three nights. Situated here in Tegucigalpa you are a good distance from another country. The cost for transportation, lodging, meals, etc, can easily make having just a visa not financially viable. In addition your time in ministry is affected by a host of unplanned interruptions. A trip out of country for your visa should be avoided. Your Foreign Income Credit may also be affected (see your tax advisor).

You don't need to work on residency until after you arrive, except of course your documents from home. As of now, the process takes \$1200 per person - plus, the cost of extending your visa (renewed monthly after the first 90 days of your arrival) until the residency reaches a certain point. We estimate 3-6 months to reach that point. The renewal cost for a visa is \$20 per person per month beginning after the expiration of the visa you receive at the airport (usually 90 days). The only document you need for visa renewal is your passport.

RESIDENCY APPLICATION: You will need a birth certificate for each person joining the mission field. If you have children in the field you must also have a marriage certificate. All the documents you get must be originally generated by the government department where they originated. No photocopies of birth certificates or other documents are accepted. Getting this done takes time and money and will vary from state to state. Once you have these documents they need to be apostilled from the secretary of state's office in the state that each document was issued.

Any letter or other document, which is un-embossed or does not have a seal, needs to be notarized and then both papers are apostilled by the secretary of state. If you have any questions please contact Pete Raineri at praineri@wgo-hn.org and he will help you through this process.

You must get the all documents while you are in the states. When you arrive here you will contact a WGO approved lawyer here and get the residency process started. Trying to get these documents from your home is difficult enough, trying to do it once you have arrived in Honduras is more difficult!

FINANCES

BUDGET

Your budget will be custom designed for your location and individual needs with guidance from us. We create a recommended budget. Typically you will be permitted to come to Honduras once you have raised 80% of your recommended budget in monthly support pledges and/or special gifts. Your monthly draw once on the mission field will be determined by the monthly approved budget.

We will finalize this budget as soon as possible, after you have received the green light to fund raise, so that when you are raising support you have a goal; also you may be asked by some churches to see your budget. Yes, people will know your money situation. In fact, when handled correctly this becomes a great tool in raising prayer and financial supporters.

SUPPORT RAISING

You need to have a strategy for raising support. We will help you develop that strategy. Please see the separate document, "Raising Support." It is important to know that raising prayer and monetary supporters is hard work and needs your full attention. This process can be frustrating, very rewarding, and refining. You need to do a short investigation of resource gathering through your church, mission

SUPPORT RAISING (CONTINUED)

committee, Internet, WGO, and other missionaries you know, and get the information on how to proceed. "People Raising" by William P. Dillon is one of many books and resources available.

Two main keys to support raising are communication and the support of your Pastor. First, if you are blessed with a Pastor or religious advisor that is missions oriented your task will be easier than going to different churches that do not know you. Second, clearly communicating WGO's ministry and your call through your story is very effective, and then clearly stating the needs you will have on the field is the primary goal you wish to achieve. You are going to be "ON" most of the time and that takes its toll, but you need to understand that *"People give to people they know, trust and care for."*

The steps in fundraising are:

- A. Green Light approval to begin fundraising
- B. Fund raising letter approval
- C. Prayer card set-up assistance and approval
- D. Use of W.G.O. Brochures and information for small group meetings, and the usage of the WGO database of photos showing facilities and ministry of W.G.O.

Contact Pete Raineri at praineri@wgo-hn.org and he will assist you. Together with WGO we will develop a plan for keeping you in contact with your supporters.

MONEY TRAIL

All your supporters need to send their money for you to WGO's stateside administrative office in Humble Texas. The address is World Gospel Outreach, P.O. Box 14348, Humble, Texas, 77347-4348. Also the WGO website at www.wgoreach.org should be clearly displayed on your letter and prayer cards. You will need to educate your supporters on the process and to have them clearly put your family name on the check to get the money credited to your account. Encourage people to start giving as soon as possible as you will have initial expenses to cover and that will be in your set-up budget. Avoid the use of the term "one time" gifts in your fund raising; instead use "special gift" as a designation on your brochures. You should never have funds directly sent to you, even if the donor does not desire a tax receipt. All funds received by you need to be sent to Humble Texas; also any cash received needs to be converted to personal check by you.

The Humble office will send a receipt back to your supporters but does not send invoices or reminders to your supporters; it is your responsibility to track and remain in contact with your supporters. At the beginning of each month WGO will email you a statement of your account with the name of the supporter and amount of the gift given to your family fund in the previous calendar month. WGO has a form for direct withdrawal you can get from the Human Resource department. Direct withdrawal (autodraft) takes a period of time to set up and have the money transferred so you need to track that if need be, also let those people know the process takes a cycle or two before the banks get it started. However, autodraft is an excellent way to get your donors on a regular automatic form of giving. Get as many of your donors on this program as you can.

How do I get the money? Before you are on the field and need reimbursement for plane tickets, fundraising costs or other initial costs budgeted, you will contact the Human Resource dept; they will advise and approve any reimbursement. Please contact them before making any purchases for which you

MONEY TRAIL (CONTINUED)

will need reimbursement they will also check that you have sufficient funds in your Humble WGO account. After your expenses are approved by HR we will request reimbursement through the finance office. The finance office will approve the “special draw” and contact the Humble office who will then issue you a check and mail it to you or direct deposit to your account.

After you have arrived on the field we will have an orientation session with you and review your working budget; after any changes, and with your and our approval, that budget will be presented to the finance office and that amount designated will be your monthly “draw.” At the beginning of each month an electronic funds transfer (EFT) in the amount of that draw (assuming you have the money in your account) will be issued in Humble and sent by our bank in Humble to your US bank account. This account will be accessible via internet so you can monitor it. You now have your money in your account. Note: Once green lighted to fund raise you need to mail a voided check to the Humble, TX office for account accessibility.

Money in Honduras is obtained by writing a check in dollars and cashing it for Lempiras at “Dicorp” (a local bank) or Coin S.A. On your first trip to Dicorp or Coin, you will be accompanied by someone who already has an account there. Unless you have residency and have a Honduran bank account you cannot write checks in Lempiras. You will need your passport, a passport copy, and a copy of your spouse’s passport. You will fill out an application and will be able to cash your check then on the other person’s account the first time and on your account after that. You will need to bring a copy of your passport to cash your checks. Note: Each time you go to Dicorp you will need to leave picture identification at the desk downstairs and get an identification card for the 5th floor. When you return to the desk you exchange the identification card for yours and leave. There are fenced parking lots in front of Dicorp and in their garage; both are guarded.

You need to budget the money you receive for your monthly “draw” as you are responsible for setting aside money for your social security taxes (you are considered self-employed), your transportation back and forth on furlough, your vacation, immigration and other expenses that are part of your monthly draw but not necessarily spent that month.

LANGUAGE TRAINING

Each missionary candidate will be assessed as to their fluency in Spanish. This assessment will take into account the future missionaries job requirements. Normally you will be required to spend 4-8 weeks very early in your first two months living with a pre-screened Honduran family and being tutored in Spanish.

TRANSPORTATION

PURCHASING OR BRINGING A CAR DOWN

It is possible to bring your vehicle down, but you will need to contact us for guidance on this. You will find that repairs are more expensive, and parts can cost up to 200% MORE than their equivalent cost in the USA, if they are even available here. Most of the vehicles sold here are for a non-American market and therefore there are few qualified mechanics for your vehicle. We recommend that you purchase a vehicle here and we will assist you in trying to locate a new or used vehicle. The purchase of a vehicle is **completely** different from the States and takes as long as a month after you arrange a deal. There also is a tax that is due. Until you purchase a vehicle, WGO can, depending on availability, let you use a ministry vehicle, manual transmission only, for a short period of time, i.e, one month you will be responsible for logging mileage and paying at the current mileage rate.

DRIVER'S LICENSE

You can only legally drive on your valid American license for 30 days after arriving in Honduras. You need to obtain a Honduran license immediately after you receive your residency credentials. We will take you to the police transport department, known as "Transito" and apply for a Honduran License. You can obtain a license for one year, two years or five years. Currently the five year costs 600 Lempiras, and will also need to bring two "carnet" sized photos. You will need to submit to a medical exam (blood pressure) and an eye exam (eye chart) and pay 100 Lempiras for that. Also your blood will be checked for the type, 50 Lempiras.

DRIVING

You will see very aggressive driving and you need to be alert for unusual and dangerous movements of buses, cars, motorbikes, bicycles, people walking, potholes, missing manhole covers, and even people fallen in those missing covers. **BE ALERT.** You don't want to have an accident here. You generally negotiate the damages of the vehicles right there. With you being North Americans there is a possibility people will look to have an accident with you to get money. If someone is hurt you may be held responsible and pay their wages and medical expenses. If someone dies you are taken immediately to jail until they assess blame. *Therefore it is extremely dangerous to stop and help in an accident you are not involved in as you possibly may be held until all is figured out.* You are required to get a cell phone for situations that happen, car breaks down, lost, etc... Also keep a list of people's phone numbers, office, home, cell in your glove box so you have a variety of options for help.

We recommend you follow the following instructions in the event of an accident:

A) DAMAGE TO CARS BUT NOT TO PEOPLE

Stay calm, and remain in your car. Lower your window slightly but not completely. When the other party comes to discuss, tell them you have called the police and will wait for them. Call the WGO main office first, then call Transito (police transport department) 230-2412 and report the accident. If it is extremely minor damage and the person seems pleasant and calm, you may wish to settle damages there and then, paying them a reasonable amount for the damage. **IF IN ANY DOUBT, wait for Transito.**

B) WHERE SOMEONE IS INJURED

Stay calm, and remain in your car. Again, lower your window slightly but not completely. When the other party comes to discuss, tell them you have called the police and an ambulance and will wait for them. Call the WGO main office first, then the Red Cross ambulance service on 195, and Call Transito 230-2412 and report the accident, making sure you tell them that you have called an ambulance. Call a lawyer (we will supply you with lawyer details) and call the US embassy on 238-5114. *If the injured party appears to be dead, do NOT stop your car. Drive to the police transport department (Transito) and while driving, call the US embassy and the lawyer. Arrange for a lawyer to meet you at the Transito and wait for him before you report the incident.*

CELLPHONE

We require that all WGO missionaries obtain a personal cell phone soon after arriving in Honduras, we will add you on to the WGO corporate plan and that is very reasonable.

MAIL

Although there is a mail service in Honduras, it is slow and very unreliable. All your support mail needs to go to the Humble, Texas office at:

World Gospel Outreach
P.O. Box 14348
Humble, TX 77347-4348

Letters and packages are held in the Humble office until a team goes through Houston and overnights there and then it is sent with them (if they have room). It can take as long as 6 to 8 weeks before things get sent to Honduras. Please have the packages clearly marked with your name and destination Mission House or Ranch.

NOTE: Packages can be sent to missionaries and/or WGO. Please contact the missionary or WGO office for notice/ approval and to verify the address (especially of the missionary).

Mail which you wish to send back to the USA (envelopes and small packages) can be sent with returning team members and others going to the States. Ask and usually someone is happy to mail things as soon as they get home. Please have the appropriate postage on them. Stamps are good things to have people send down in care packages.

INITIAL SHIPPING OF ITEMS TO HONDURAS

You may wish to ship furniture and other household items to Honduras in order to set up home, however, most of the items you would ship are available here and by the time you add shipping and import taxes your home goods will be more expensive. Occasionally WGO has container loads of items shipped down, and we can sometimes accommodate missionaries' personal furniture etc on these containers. Contact us for current details and costs; you will be paying your portion of the container shipping fee and also the import tax.

FOOD

You can purchase most food items in the grocery stores, please be advised that food costs average 150% of the monthly food bill you paid in the states. The American brands are more expensive and may have an import tax added to the price. Some of the Honduran brands are cheaper but the quality varies. It is not advisable to buy any food from street stands as the food may be OK but the person preparing it may not have the best hygiene and that's where you can encounter health problems. Ask about a restaurant before you try it as we have been to most and can tell the ones to avoid. There are a number of chain restaurants here and they have higher standards of cleanliness making them a better choice in terms of health issues.



FOOD (CONTINUED)

All fruit and vegetables need to be placed in bleached tap water (1tsp per gallon) and soaked 20 minutes to kill any parasites. A good alternative to bleach is “Microdin” which can be purchased at local pharmacies. Put one to two drops in the water; let the water sit for 10 to 20 minutes and then fruit and vegetables soak for about 20 minutes.

IMMUNIZATIONS

You should check with your doctor regarding which immunizations are needed for Honduras. Immunizations which current missionaries have had include: Tetanus, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Rabies, Typhoid and Diphtheria. These diseases are a possibility here.

CONTACTS/EMERGENCIES

Please contact Pete Raineri at praineri@wgo-hn.org for further information or, call us (713) 344-1449